

Dear Bethany Family:

We give God thanks for your prayers and continued support. You certainly have been faithful as you live out the call of Christ in your lives. We pray for you as some of our family and extended family have contracted the virus, lost loved ones, lost jobs, been working in difficult situations, suffered from isolation, worried over the state of the world, and at times struggled to find hope. We know your pain. We feel it as well. May we all be reminded, we find our ultimate hope in Jesus Christ.

It is with much prayer and discussion that we have decided to suspend in person worship services beginning this Sunday and Wednesday Evening Bible Studies until the next Trustee meeting on January 14. At that meeting, we will re-evaluate the safety of returning to in person services. This includes the Christmas Eve Worship Services. They will all be online: 4:00 pm Communion, 6:00 pm Downtown Fellowship, and 10:00 pm Traditions.

The rise in COVID cases and the impact that has on our hospitals and medical staff is a big part of our decision. We are also concerned for the safety of our people and community. We are fortunate that we have the volunteers and staff to be able to provide online worship and Bible Studies. We are concerned for their safety when they are in house. Without them, we are not able to be online.

We are concerned about those who were coming in house and are not able to view online. If you know of anyone in this position, please let the church office know so that we can try to find a way to connect these people. If you have other questions or concerns, please contact us.

Hear these comforting words from Paul to the Philippians while he was in jail and they were suffering from persecution.

Philippians 1:12-14 (NIV)

[12] Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. [13] As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. [14] Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

May we not lose sight of the opportunities we have to be instruments of healing and hope to each other and all the world. Continue to look for ways to bless your family, friends, and neighbors. Since we are not in person, consider inviting someone to join our online Christmas Eve worship services or any of our online offerings. You could invite your next-door neighbor or someone you know who lives far away. You may direct them to our website at <https://www.bethanyredlion.com/>

Our prayer is that we will be back in person soon, and all of you will remain safe through this season. Advent is a season of hope. That hope is always in Jesus Christ.

Bethany Trustees // 11 December 2020